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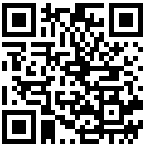

News Boy

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THE NEWSBOY.

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A VOICE

FROM THE

NEWSBOYS.

PUBLISHED
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE AUTHOR.
1860.

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INTRODUCTION.

MANY of those books whose office it is to depict humanity in a few of its manifold phases, are like some paintings of natural scenery, mere fancy sketches of what *may*, and *might* be, taking things as they are, and condensing into one tablet, striking features which in real life are only found diluted with what is common-place. Others are truthful copies of what actually exists as a fact, and often sacrifice for the sake of absolute truth much garniture which, skilfully thrown around them, would make them more attractive though more fanciful.

This little work can certainly claim to come under the latter class; it is not in any way an artistic combination of various features of human life to make a readable story; but

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simply a daguerreotype of fact, untouched by art.

It is the plain story of one who represents a *class;* of one who *alone* has perhaps no very special claim upon the reader's attention, but who, as *one* speaking for *many*, hopes that these few pages may not be considered unworthy of perusal.

The class to which he belongs is most generally recognised under the term "Newsboy," but properly embraces all those of either sex, in our great cities, who at a tender age are compelled to rely upon their own wits and exertions for support; though very many of them, like him whose history is detailed in these pages, may never have earned their subsistence by retailing the news of the day.

In reference to the preparation of this little work it should here be stated, that it has been essentially written by Johnny M——, whose varied experience forms the thread of the story.

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The undersigned has, by request, performed the necessary duty of putting it into a somewhat more correct and attractive shape than could possibly be expected of a boy of only sixteen years, which is all that he as yet numbers. Yet in this revision, care has been exercised to leave every page as nearly as possible in its original and characteristic shape.

That a newsboy of only sixteen, who has enjoyed most limited advantages in the way of a common education, should be capable of using such mature and correct language, as is here put in print, may seem to most readers incredible; but is not so strange to those who know Johnny, and who are aware that his native powers of reflection, in connection with his habits of associating constantly with persons older than himself, especially with seminary and college students, have given him a power and maturity of expression much beyond his years.

Lest a misconstruction should be put upon

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the *motives* which have led to the publication of this work, it may be best to mention the two considerations which have been most influential in bringing it about.

The *first*, and we hope not an unworthy one, is the earnest desire of directing a practical public sympathy to a large class of the needy and unfortunate.

The *second*, and we hope an excusable one, is the desire of obtaining in this way funds which may be employed in throwing open the halls of seminary and college, to our studious newsboy.

In view of all the attendant circumstances, it cannot be necessary to urge the kind reader to deal gently with the *faults* which he may find in these pages, while he lays to heart the facts here revealed concerning suffering humanity.

W. B. D.

ENGLEWOOD, N. J., January 1860.

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A VOICE FROM THE NEWSBOYS.

CHAPTER I.

THE HAPPY HOME.

My father's employment—Our place of residence—The family—The homestead—Childish sports—Infant school songs—Our religious training—Royal Blue Coat Hospital—A serious accident—The punctual cat—My mother's instructions—Her early death.

It would be impossible for me to give any connected history of my early childhood; but the few recollections of those days which now hang like pictures in my memory, are those of bright and peaceful scenes. My father, an architect by profession, was, in those days, a respectable man, and quite prosperous in

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his business; he stood well in society, and was exceedingly affectionate and indulgent to his family.

The place of our residence was a village not far from Liverpool in England; our little family group consisted of my father (who was Scotch by birth), my mother (English by birth), my elder brothers, James and Robert, my younger sister, Annie, and myself.

I can remember that when I was a little boy under five years old, we used to live in a very nice house which belonged to my father, in front of which was a pretty little garden-plot, containing a great variety of grasses and flowers, kept in order by our hired man.

It was our delight to sport with the roses, which were creeping up the side-wall of the house, or to toss in merry games the beautiful round pebbles of the gravel-walk, which we used to nick-name "*Jack-stones.*"

But I did not play *all* the time; my father sent me to an infant school as the starting-

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point of my education, and many are the delicate childish stanzas which were then impressed indelibly upon my mind. Our feet and hands, as well as our cheerful tongues, were all engaged in such a chorus as this:—

The rain is falling very fast,
  We can't get out to-day;
  But clap, clap, clap away!
The infant school's a happy place,
  Upon a rainy day.

While the rain comes pouring down,
  Then's the time to sing our song,
  Then clap, clap, clap away!
The infant school's a happy place,
  Upon a rainy day.

Or this:—

See the neat little clock;
  In the corner it stands,
And points out the time,
  With its two pretty hands—
The one shows the minutes,
  And the other the hours,
As oft you may see
  In the old church towers.

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The pendulum swings,
Inside the long case,
And sends the two hands,
Round the neat little face,
As they move—one so slow,
And the other so quick,
With its tick-a-tick-a-tick!
Tick-a-tick! tick! tick!

Our religious training was not neglected; for we attended a Sabbath-school, and after returning home from its exercises, father, who was a church-goer, and who, though not a professor of religion, had at this time a great respect for it, used to question and instruct us on the catechism, and did much to impress the truth upon our minds.

My elder brothers, James and Robert, used to be connected with an institution called the "Royal Blue Coat Hospital," at Dublin, where they received a regular course of educational instruction. In vacation time Robert used to teach me comical rhymes which he had picked up at the school, and it was a matter of great

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pleasure to me to repeat after him the names of his school-fellows as he gave them to me. They ran something like this: Briton Scott, Campbell Rook, Woodwards, Ramesley Tinkler, Don Devoy, Stoker Withers, Wesley Freeman, Laughley Jones, Right, Cruikshanks, Brown, Green, Dunn, Pennyfeather, &c., &c. These names were mostly nicknames. Robert was called *Britton*, because he could run faster than any other boy in the school, and James was called *Pennyfeather*, because he was so proud. The boys in this institution wore yellow vests, blue coats with brass buttons, yellow stockings, knee-breeches, and black caps, with as many yards of black ribbon as each boy could afford.

An accident happened to me while we were living at this place, whose effects were lasting upon me. One day while playing with some of my schoolmates, on what was called the "flying swing," I fell and injured my left leg severely; I suffered a good deal of pain from it for a good while, and at last it resulted

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in making me permanently lame, by causing one of my legs to be three inches longer than the other. Since that I have had to hobble along through life, though fortunately I can manage pretty well, without using crutches. There is one comfortable reflection in this matter, and that is, *it might have turned out much worse!*

In speaking of these days, I might mention a curious recollection which I have of an interesting domestic *cat*, in which I used to take great delight. It was a favorite of my father's, and a very useful puss withal. One of father's regular duties was to rise by four or five o'clock every morning, and call the roll of names, to see whether all the masons and carpenters were on hand ready to go to work. Now this favorite cat used to call him every morning, as regularly as the clock struck five; it would climb up to the bed-room window, and knock on the pane until the window was opened, and if its rapping was not heard, it would set up a mewing, and

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would not stop until it had gained an entrance. When it had at last got into the room it would show its delight by waving its tail, and brushing its sides against father's legs. It was a beautiful glossy black and white cat; it would jump high over your hands if you held them out three or four feet from the ground. When it died, I made a little grave for it, and put a tombstone at its head with this inscription, which I had persuaded some one to write upon it:—"Here lies poor puss, who died in the year A. D. 1847; may she rest in peace!"

Many were the happy hours spent in our then united family. But there was at last one vacancy in this my early, and I may say my *only true home*. It was a vacancy which never could be filled;—the absence of my own dear mother, who was called away from her family while her children were yet in their tender years.

One of the earliest recollections which I have of my mother is of her trying to teach me that best and most beautiful of prayers,

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"Our Father which art in Heaven," &c. The time of her death I remember well; father took me into the room where she lay in silent death upon a white bed, while her face was as white as the counterpane itself. When he told me to kiss her I was afraid to do it—for all the ghostly stories which the servants had told me about the dead rushed upon my mind, and it was not until father told me that death was but a long *sleep*, and tried otherwise to soothe my mind, that I ventured, crying and terrified, to put one kiss on that cold cheek. There is something so awful in death that it impresses even a child so young as to be entirely ignorant of its true nature—and the feelings with which that scene inspired me never left my mind. After leaving the room, I was dressed in my best clothes, and put in a carriage, which wheeled along in a slow and solemn way to her last resting-place; when they had covered her with the sod, we came away mournful and sad, though I could hardly comprehend the reason *why;* perhaps it was

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the departed spirit of my dear mother hovering over me, that impressed me so powerfully. Every new year of my life has made me more and more conscious of the extent of this my early loss, and oft-times have I repeated from my very heart those affecting words of Cowper:—

"My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
* * * * * * * *
I learned at last submission to my lot,
But though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot."

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CHAPTER II.

THE GLOOMY HOME.

A new mother—Drinking parents—The old homestead abandoned—We become emigrants—Tenants—Life in New York city—A short term of schooling—Stealing fuel—An accommodating stevedore—A queer way of dispensing justice—The razor, the ham, and the strap—Misery at home—An oath with a sad flaw in it—An eventful whipping—The match trade—Commencement of a pedlar's life—Description of a family room—Arrival, sojourn, and departure of James and Robert.

ALL this that I have said of my early, happy home seems to me now like a dream in the past. For some time after mother's death our Aunt Mary took her place in the household, and discharged her duties with a tender care,—father loved us then, and we took our fill of childish joy. But a sad change came over the scene.

After remaining a number of years a

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widower, father married again. We thought ourselves happy in our new mother, for she seemed at first to wish to please us, and to make us love her. The first thing that she did after becoming acquainted with us was to give each of us a shilling, and I am sure that as we ate the candy which this money procured us, we laid up as our first store, considerably more than a shilling's worth of attachment to our new parent. But she did not keep up this interest in us; she gradually grew cold and distant; we saw less and less of her, and were beginning to be glad of it, when a child of her own was born. We were at once treated with neglect—and from the time of the birth of her second child, all regard for our welfare disappeared from the mind of our stepmother. Scoldings and beatings took the place of kindly words; but this was not the worst. She and my father lived very unhappily together; he would often spend the night away from home, carousing with a few companions, spending in this way

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much of his hard-earned money; and she would manage, while he was at his daily work, to drink a great deal of whiskey. She at last neglected entirely her household duties, left the table in disorder, the cow unmilked, the children uncared-for, and indeed often entertained carousing friends against father's will.

Finally, in a fit of passion at her conduct, he declared that he would leave the homestead, and emigrate to America, in hopes that such a change of circumstances would make things better. He sold out most of his effects for seven hundred guineas; left James and Robert in a course of instruction at the Royal Blue Coat Hospital, at Dublin, paid our passage to New York, and, in about six months after reaching that city, he had not one red cent in his pocket. He then pawned his gun and other articles of property, and began to work for seventy-five cents a day, in the cabinet-shop of a Mr. T——, in Chatham street. At the same time my stepmother

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took in sewing, and for a time we got along very nicely. My sister, Annie, two years younger than myself, was sent with me to s hool for two months, but at the end of this time our schooling was suddenly terminated for the following reason.

Father happened one day to notice a tenant, who lived next door, as he was carrying into his house a large bundle of sticks. On inquiry the man said that he had collected this wood on the docks. Father at once concluded that I could make myself useful in the same way; so my school days were abruptly terminated, and my time was spent in collecting firewood from wood-piles on the steamer-docks. Sometimes we would find stray pieces lying neglected on a wharf, where there had stood a few days before a huge pile, which had since been thrown aboard some steamer. Or if these chances were wanting, a cautious prowl around some large pile would generally afford an opportunity to make way with a good-sized stick;

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for it mattered not to my parents how dishonestly I might come by my daily load. In truth, if the truth must be told, father sometimes gave me three or four cents to slip into the hands of some stevedore as he was shovelling coal into the bunker of a vessel, telling him it would get him a drink of brandy. In return, the stevedore would pitch a shovelful of coal into my basket, and by proper management we could keep him friendly for some time, so as to secure a daily basket of fuel.

From this time I had to supply the house with wood and coal, and meanwhile my sister Annie, who had been withdrawn from school, commenced learning to sew at home. From this time, my life of trouble and rough experience commenced. Father would come home at six o'clock, send for brandy and drink it; our stepmother would help him to make way with it, and when they were about half-drunk, they would beat us children, and kick us about the room, or sometimes, leav-

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ing us to our fate, they would fight together, first with angry words, and then with blows, which mostly however came from her. I have several times seen her seize him by the hair, and drag him to the ground, while he refused to strike her back, saying that he would not hit a woman.

I will mention here a little incident which occurred about this time, which will illustrate, in a small way, the kind of justice which a great many poor children receive at the hands of their parents, when those parents, who ought to be the best earthly friends of their offspring, are degraded by the intoxicating cup.

One day father went out with my step mother to pay some one a visit. While he was gone, some one of the family made use of his razor in cutting off a slice of ham. It may have been one of us children, or it may have been the servant girl (for we still retained a servant girl, whose passage over from England father had paid when we came

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over, and who was now paying him back in service). For my part, at any rate, I knew nothing of the author of the mischief. When father went to shave the next morning, he found his razor in this very dirty state, and began to scold pretty severely; as no one confessed the deed, he declared that he would be sure to find the right one who had the audacity to meddle with his sacred hair-cutting instrument, for he was always very particular about it, and took great pride in sharpening it to that point of perfection when it could split a hair. So he commenced to catechise all of us in this way:—"Johnny, did you use my razor?" "No, sir!" "Do you know who did it?" "No, sir!" "Well, then you may go into the bed-room and take off your clothes, and I will soon find the one who did it!" Sister Annie, who was the next in years, was next called to the stand. Question. "Annie, who used my razor?" Answer. "I don't know, sir." "Did Johnny?" "I didn't see him

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do it." "Well, who did you see with the razor?" "*No one,* sir!" "Well, that will do; you may go and strip off your clothes too!" "William, who did you say used my razor?" "Nobody, sir!" "What kind of a fellow is *nobody?* I should like to meet him; he is a very mischievous chap! If I could find him, I would teach him a lesson or two! That will do for you, sir! Go and peel off!" "Janey, did you use my razor?" "No, sir, I didn't use it at all, nor did I see anybody use it!" "Well, I guess, as the Yankees say, I can hit upon the right one! You may go and take off your clothes!" Then, when we were all huddled together in the bed-room, like chickens in a hen-coop, and half-stripped of our clothes, father entered with a strap in his hand, and commenced the programme by flogging me, then Annie, then Willie, and then Janey. When he had finished his task, he made the very philosophical remark that now he was sure

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he had hit upon the right one! which, to say the *least,* was very doubtful!

The above scene was but one of a hundred such, enacted in those few years of misery when we lived with father in New York; he was what he used to call *tipsy,* when he performed the agreeable task of hitting the right one; and now that the time of being under the control of such parents is past, we never think of the razor, the ham, and the strap, without both a smile at the ridiculousness of the scene, and at the same time a tear of sorrow at the thought that those who were naturally affectionate and kind should be so completely changed. There is a cause for everything that comes to pass, and the cause of this change was strong drink. If the case of my father can warn any one, who reads this book, from the tempting cup of intoxicating drink, then I will not regret that it has been here recorded; and if this little volume should cause any to stand, and examine whether they are drifting on

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in such a ruinous course, and if it should be the means of holding them back in their mad career downwards, it will abundantly have accomplished its mission.

After working six months for Mr. T——, father left that place, and got temporary occupation as house-carpenter, by which he earned two dollars a day. I now thought that he would let me go to school, as he was earning enough to support us comfortably, and at the same time pay our school expenses; but alas! how hard a lot it is to be a drunkard's son!

No! he would not let us go to school, for he knew that my time was more valuable at stealing coal and gathering wood, and by getting higher wages he only had more money to spend in drink!

This job lasted only two weeks, when he found work in Yorkville, while we moved up to the corner of Fortieth street and Tenth avenue. He left home on Monday, and did not return till Saturday evening, when out

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of his salary of fifteen dollars a week, he would bring home but four or five dollars; the rest he had spent for board, and, sad to say, *for drink*. Yet we always awaited with a sort of pleasure his coming on Saturday evening, as we generally had something good to eat on those occasions, which was far from being the case during his absence; for we rarely had more than two dollars and a half to support the family, of six children and their mother, from Monday to Saturday.

During our experience of this kind of life, which lasted twelve months, we thought ourselves comparatively happy, because our father was not at home to knock us around; but our conceived happiness quickly vanished, when he left Yorkville and engaged in the service of a builder in New York city, a Mr. Y——, by name. And here let me not speak of the nails which I was compelled to steal, and afterwards dispose of at the junk-store, at two cents a pound, to pay for father's brandy.

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He soon became an almost hopeless drunkard; got out of work, out of money, and, consequently, out of bread. STARVE, was the word! Yet my father was a kind man and parent when he was sober, and in those moments of sobriety he could not endure to see us starving; but what could he do? Ashamed that he had allowed drink to get the mastery over him, he at last made a sort of a resolve to break off this ruinous habit. Yes! he several times took his Bible oath, for instance, that for six months he would not taste either brandy, beer, rum, ale, or whiskey, &c.; but he was always sure to leave out something; in one case he left out gin; on another occasion he included gin in his empty oath, but left out whiskey! Meanwhile I was compelled to pursue my occupation of stealing wood and coal from the docks.

The time shortly came when there was no alternative left to my father but to pawn his feather-bed, and one gloomy day he carried

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this to the pawnbroker's, and got the whole sum of six dollars, for what had originally cost fifty dollars, and was still in good order. With a sad heart, and a shame-stricken conscience, he pocketed the money, and came home. Of course, he concluded that he could do nothing less than to try to drown his guilty thoughts by copious draughts of GIN!

Thus my father plunges ever deeper and deeper into the depths of drunkenness! O, wretched man! and still more wretched family! It was that arch-enemy of mankind, STRONG DRINK, that robbed reason from one of the best and kindest of fathers; that changed *him*, who was once alive with generous feelings and kindness of heart, who was made in the image of God, into a heartless and miserable drunkard!

One day when I was out gathering sticks, I caught sight of a nice piece of board, lying on the ground by itself. Quick as thought, I put it on my shoulder, and was marching

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home with it, when its owner came chasing after me. I tossed the board away, and used my legs to the best of my ability, but he could run much faster, and soon caught me, and caned my legs till they bled. On reaching home, I told father of the occurrence, and declared that I would not steal wood any more; he grew very angry, and scolded me severely, till I felt miserable enough. To cool his anger, I mentioned that I had seen a great many boys selling matches, at a profit of from fifty to seventy-five cents a day, and there appeared to be no good reason why I should not make money in the same way; that a profit of fifty cents a day would enable me to purchase fuel and lights, if not more. Father gave his consent to the experiment.

Starting with a capital of twenty-five cents, which father advanced me, I bought two packs of matches, at twelve cents a pack, and had one cent left to buy cord with. There are thirty-six boxes in each pack,

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and by taking some out of each box (as they were very full), I made twenty-five new bunches. Selling a box or a bunch for one cent, I thus got ninety-seven cents for my whole stock, besides five cents which were given to me. Of these earnings I spent two cents for cakes, and carried the remaining dollar home to my father.

Greatly rejoiced to find that I could make so much, he at once began to praise me up —called me his *big son;* said that I was the best and most dutiful son that he had; did not ask me to go out for brandy, but sent sister Annie. When she had got it, he made some punch, and treated me with a glassful.

Now, I was a real peddler, licensed and congratulated by my father; and my usual weariness on retiring that night was overbalanced by the remembrance of my day's success, and its acceptability to my parents.

Let me break the thread of my story for a moment, to give a short description of the

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room in which we were now living, in Forty-fourth street. The whole of our family, seven in number, were occupying the same room, for this was all that father at this time was able to rent. Its size was about thirty feet by twenty; in one corner there stood a good-sized and plain bedstead, made of hemlock by my father, and it was mounted by a bed stuffed with chaff. This had to accommodate five of us children—Annie, William, Mary Jane, Margaret Ann, and myself. To stow away so many in one bed, it was necessary to arrange it so as that three slept at the head and two at the foot, packed together very much like sardines in a box. And though we sometimes had trouble in our crowded night-colony, on account of those at one end getting more than their share of the bed-clothes, at the expense of those at the other, yet, on the whole, we got along peaceably and comfortably. In the opposite corner, across the room, was a five-dollar bedstead, containing a good soft bed, in

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which my father and step-mother slept, together with my newly-born brother, Jonathan.

In one of the remaining corners, there stood a carpenter's bench, at which my father had sometimes made little wooden stools, for the use of ladies while they were at church, or while sewing at home; and which I used to sell for from twelve to fifteen cents apiece (being several cents more than they cost), and on some days, when father had been very industrious, and had made twenty-four of them, we had done pretty well in our earnings; but now he had neglected this source of support. The rest of the room was taken up by a plain table, three chairs, two benches, and a few other very humble articles of furniture.

Such was the situation of the family which I was now compelled to support. Day after day, it was my task to set out immediately after breakfast, with my basket on my arm, for the store where I bought my stock of

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matches. This was in Twenty-ninth street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, and was kept by two German brothers named Jacob and John. They sold matches at wholesale to peddlers, and I was guided thither by some little match girls. When I had bought my matches from Jake (as Jacob was nicknamed) I took them to a bench set apart for that purpose by the proprietors, and when I had removed some matches from every lot of which to make new bundles, as before described, then the job of peddling was undertaken. The way this was conducted was by going through one street at a time, calling at all the houses on both sides, and beginning each day where I had left off. It would startle some people to know the number of families in this great city who gain their whole support from the sales of matches. I knew two families who supported themselves by making paper boxes to hold matches for eight cents a gross. Not less than fifty boys and girls lived by peddling matches bought

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from Jake and John. There were besides about twenty men and thirty women, mostly Germans and Irish, who obtained a livelihood in the same manner. Jake and John's store is only one of the six dozen branches of the Thirtieth street factory, and each branch has probably as many customers as they have.

Hard as this life was, it was infinitely better than my former occupation, which my conscience told me, even then, was *wrong*, and which I cannot now look back upon but with sorrow and shame. Nothing would have induced me to stain these pages by the recital of those days, in which we were supported in so dishonest a way, but the desire to be faithful, and tell the *whole* truth, especially as I fear there are too many in every great city whose history could be written in the same words, to whose condition every benevolent man and woman should awake!

On reaching home each evening, tired and hungry, it would be a stroke of good luck if I did not get a scolding, if not a beating,

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for not having made larger sales in my traffic; for father was becoming more and more hardened, using at least half of my daily earnings for strong drink, and refusing to give me any breakfast or supper, that I might obtain food for myself from those of my customers who were charitably disposed.

My stepmother was just as bad, if not worse; for she would drink heavily, on the pretence of keeping the liquor out of father's way; yet, whenever he made a good resolve not to drink any more, and left it off for a day or two, she would say: "Send for a little drop! it will not do you any harm;" and in this way he was drawn back into his bad habits again. I think my father might have reformed, if it had not been for her influence.

While we were in this wretched state, we suddenly got word that James and Robert, my elder brothers, who had been put to school in Dublin, on our leaving England, had arrived at New York. James, the

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eldest, was seventeen, and Robert was fifteen years of age. They had acquired a decent education, and were energetic in whatever they undertook. Father soon found them, and tried his best to induce them to come and live with him, hoping they would then help to support him; but they declined his request, much to his chagrin. Robert obtained work in a brass foundry, on wages of two dollars and fifty cents, and James in a grocery store, at four dollars a week.

Father came home angry enough at their refusal, and made me work all the harder for awhile; but about a month after, Robert got out of work, and then took up his abode in our house. He was one of those persons who take life easily, and who are willing to try anything that comes to hand. Accordingly he entered at once with me into the business of peddling. We added the item of picture-books to my usual stock, and drove quite a brisk business, he taking one side of a street and I the other, making

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from one to two dollars a day. We continued our labor, which was the only means of support for father and the family, for one year; and the latter part of this time William and Jane began to try their hands at the same business. Finally, James also came to live with us, and as father used most of the money which he paid for his board, for drink, this was an additional burden on us.

After awhile, Robert thought that he was getting too big to be a peddler any longer, and contrived to apprentice himself to a machinist; in this position he worked faithfully from morning till night. Sometimes he had to leave home in the morning with but a crust of bread, or if he wished anything more substantial, he had to get up very early and cook it himself. Then, on cold snowy days he had to go out with but scanty clothing on his back, and leaky and rickety shoes. Oh! how I used to pity him, though I was as badly off myself; but I used to think that I would rather bear double hardship than to see him suffer so without a murmur!

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A few months afterwards, one Sunday morning, James was sitting by the fire, reading the novel "Claude Duval, the Dashing Highwayman." Father, who had got a sudden streak of morality, jumped out of bed and snatched the book from his hands, administering at the same time a reproof for his indulging in such reading on the Sabbath. James, very much irritated, sprang to his feet, called father a drunken sot, said that if he were not his son, he would strike him, and declared that he would leave the house the next morning. Sharp words were given in return, which only strengthened this resolution, and the next day James paid up his board in full, and left, as he had threatened.

Robert also soon became alienated in the following way. He appropriated seven shillings of his hard-earned money for a pair of shoes, of which he was greatly in need. For this father scolded him severely, and telling him to leave the house, assisted him to do so, by thrusting him out of the door. He then began boarding in a house where

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the charge was two dollars and fifty cents a week, but found himself unable to keep up this arrangement, for father immediately went to the shop where he was apprenticed, demanded and obtained Robert's wages.

Finding that, as he was not yet of age, he could not prevent this, Robert at last ran away, and, entirely at a loss to know what to do next, he was wandering along the docks, when he saw a schooner just casting loose from the wharf. He at once jumped aboard, and asked if they did not want a hand. The captain told him to fall to work, and he was soon busy in his new employment. I saw him for a few hours one year after this event; he had kept up his sea-life, and told me that on the next voyage, he was to be the second mate; since that time I have neither seen nor heard one word from my banished brother, Robert.

James worked at the painting business for awhile, and then engaged himself in a bakery. I saw him once, a good while after he left our house, but have not seen him since that time.

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CHAPTER III.

NO HOME.

The runaways—Using a stage for a bed-room—The capture, and its consequences—Another escape—Nights on Fulton Ferry boats—A treacherous hostess—The second capture—The twenty shilling piece—Sunday school—The last feather breaking the camel's back—A rebellious speech—The last punishment at home—Our final escape.

My own position was now fast becoming unendurable. I was liable at any time to be knocked about the room and beaten by my parents, and we children had to work very hard to earn money while they stayed in idleness at home, and drank away a large portion of our earnings. Father often spoke of James and Robert as ungrateful sons; but for my part I became very much inclined to imitate their example, in deserting

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a home which had become only an abode of misery. I carried out my inclination at last, by staying away from home one night, and sleeping in a stage, and so for two or three nights—while I supported myself by peddling in the day.

On the following Sunday, I met brother William, and we went down to the river to bathe. On our return we met father, who at once made for us. I did not run, and he caught hold of me, but William had made good use of his legs, and father could not secure him without letting me go. In this dilemma, he promised me that if I would persuade Willie to return, he would not punish us for our conduct; so I called Willie back, and we all went home. But the promise was speedily broken, and father, stripping our backs of clothing, beat us with a piece of clothes-line till the blood came trickling down. We promised him that if he would leave off this punishment, we would not run away again, but that if he

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did *not*, we would seize the first chance to escape from him. But this declaration only irritated him the more, and increased the weight of the blows. We kept our word; we ran away at the first good chance that we found. The occasion of our doing so was as follows: A few days after the flogging (which we did not soon forget), in the course of our trading, we left some benches with a lady, *on trust;* father was displeased that we should have done so, and sternly commanded us not to come home again without the money.

The next day the lady failed to have the ready money, so we took father at his word, and did not return home, but recovered the benches, and sold them for a higher price than we had previously asked; with this money we bought a lot of matches, as our stock in trade, and commenced business on our own hook.

That night we got along by paying for a trip on one of the Fulton ferry boats, and

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then taking our night's rest on the seats in the gentlemen's cabin. The following day we made two dollars, and at night slept, as before, on the ferry boats. Then Willie and I got accidentally separated for a day, but finally met at the store of a kind German, who kept a grocery store in Thirty-eighth street. Willie had succeeded in getting two dollars and a quarter for about one dollar's worth of children's picture books, which we thought a stroke of very good luck.

There was a woman named Mrs. Moore, with whom we were somewhat acquainted, living in Thirty-eighth street, and it occurred to us that she might perhaps be willing to board us; so we went that evening to her house. She was very much surprised to see us, but seemed to give us a cordial welcome. We made arrangements to board and lodge with her, and paid her, in advance, seven dollars, which was nearly all that we had at that time. For two or three days things went on smoothly, but she at last proved

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treacherous, and sent word secretly to our father, of our whereabouts; and the next Sunday evening, while we were at tea, it was our turn to be surprised; for very suddenly our appetite was spoiled by the unpleasant fact that father walked quickly into the room; and, while the bread was still in our mouths, he seized us by the coat collar as his lawful prisoners! We were speedily shown the way homewards, which we knew too well already; and another flogging was administered, in hope of keeping us from playing truant again.

For a time we were not allowed to stir out of the house, but finally we resumed our work of trading, with the same success as before. On one occasion, two or three weeks after this, we had such poor luck in the city, that we paid four cents for ferriage, and were taken to Brooklyn. We did not succeed much better here, but when we were returning in one of the evening boats, a gentleman on board gave me a twenty shil-

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ling gold-piece. I thought at the time that it was a ten cent piece, and merely thanked him for his kindness, and went on my way. As we felt very tired on reaching the New York side, we got into one of the Eighth Avenue cars, and when the conductor came around I handed him my supposed ten cent piece. To my surprise he asked if I had nothing else, and I answered that I had, and paid my fare in other money. When he returned the gold piece, I looked at it very closely, supposing that it was brass, and that the person who put it into my hand was only fooling me. But when we left the car we had a chance to examine it by the light from the window of a liquor store, when I made out, as I supposed, that it was a two and a quarter gold piece; for my education was so deficient, that I supposed the one-half must stand for *two shillings*. As soon as we came to this conclusion, we went into the store, and I asked the bar keeper to give me change for a two dollar and a quarter gold

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piece. He saw my mistake, and tried to make a speculation by giving me the change which I asked for; but he fell short of the amount twenty-five cents; and when he had failed in his attempts to borrow this amount, he concluded, seeing that he could not impose upon me, to undeceive me, and informed me of the true value of the gold piece. We took it home and gave it to father; he of course was delighted to receive it, and the next morning, which was Sunday, he sent to the distillery for a gallon of brandy.

While he and my stepmother were in bed drunk; I got breakfast with five cents, which I had left from my earnings; but father woke up after awhile and inquired where I had obtained the money for the breakfast; on my telling him, he said that it was a nice thing for me to be spending his money in that way. My assertion that it was my own earnings, had no weight with him, and he soon went on from scolding to beating and kicking us and every thing else around the room, till he

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got thoroughly tired and went to bed again drunk.

Then stepmother took her turn at scolding; and to get out of her way I asked permission to attend Sunday school.

I had attended Sunday school a number of times, having been induced to do so in the following way: A gentleman once met me while I was peddling, and asked me to attend his school; he gave me at the same time a three cent piece. I got my father's permission to do so, and went as invited; heard the story of Lazarus, and the rich man, and was so much interested, that I went again the next Sunday, and heard about Joseph and his brethren. For some time after this, whenever I had made good sales during the week, father would let me go to this Sunday school. I thought I was entitled to the privilege this week, and though the school was twenty blocks off, yet I would have gladly walked that distance for the purpose. But my stepmother only scolded me, when I asked per-

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mission, and said "You are a pretty looking fellow to go to Sunday school, with such clothes!" So this privilege was refused, and instead of going to study the examples of good men and women, we were obliged to remain in our dismal home and share the misery of seeing both of our parents in a state of drunkenness all day, and to feel their abuse, when for a few moments they came to their senses sufficiently to notice us in any way.

Towards evening of that day, while my sister Annie was out in the area washing the ashes away from a pailful of cinders, to save the little coal that might thus be obtained, some rude street boys came, and, leaning over the railing, began to call her hard names. My stepmother hearing it, asked me impatiently what they were doing so for. I was myself in a very impatient mood, as I had been thinking over our hard life, of little pleasure or comfort and much abuse; so I at once seized the occasion, which

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her question presented, to give her a piece of my mind.

Accordingly I poured out involuntarily in words the thoughts that had been crowding on my mind, and answered her by saying: "I am sure I don't know; *you* ought to know better than *I*, for you are in the house all the year round, and do nothing but sit at the fire helping father to drink all that we earn! You don't care *where* or *how* we get it, so long as we bring you this money, for which we have to slave from morning till night! You need not hope that it will be *always* so; for I am going to run away, and shall go where you will not be able to find me! Once every three weeks you carry to an office down town some shirts, made for you mostly by sister Annie; you get the money for them, and call it *your* earnings, and while you continue to scold us, you never cease to talk of *your earnings*, even after you have used up in drink all that you can possibly call yours, and then, for the

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next three weeks, have to depend upon our little daily sales for your support and your *drink!*"

Just at this juncture father burst into the room, very much excited, saying, "I have heard every word of it, sir!" Then, snatching up a stick, he dealt a heavy blow on the table, with the words: "I will teach you how to use your tongue towards *her*, sir!" I did not speak, for I knew my time had come, and it had; for in an instant he began to strike me with the stick. I ran towards the door, declaring that I would rather die in the street than to be scolded and abused by him. Then he seized me by the neck, drew me into a corner, and beat and kicked me till he was tired, and I was pretty well used-up, when he raised me to my feet, and ordered me to bed. I answered that he could kill me as well with my clothes on as in bed, and begged him to do it at once, rather than to leave me in such pain. His

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only reply was to push me into bed, half-dead as I was.

When I awoke the next morning my face was very swollen and sore, from my hard treatment on the previous evening; but I arose and got breakfast ready, after which father and stepmother came up. Father began to eat, but she declared that she would not use one cent of my earnings after this. Father, looking very sternly at me, ordered me to take my wares out at once, and sell them, so as to bring in as much money as possible. Glad enough to escape, I silently obeyed, accompanied by William and Jane. That night Jane slept in the station-house, while Willie and I made a bed-room of a grocery-man's coal-box.

On the next day, we made ten shillings by our sales, which I sent home by Jane, who was, however, careful to avoid telling where we were; and the following night, by the kindness of the grocery-man, of whom I have before spoken. we were accommodated

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in his store, and on the third evening we were about to take our night's rest in the gentleman's cabin of one of the ferry-boats, when one of the deck-hands came in; on hearing our story he took us below, into the engine-room—kindly gave us a cup of tea, and some bread and butter, and allowed us a good sleep in one corner of the room. With the daylight our usual business of trading returned; this time we occupied ourselves in selling books in Brooklyn. Selecting some street, William would take one side, and I the other; after ringing the door-bell, we would ask to see the gentleman or lady of the house; and on their appearance, would display our assortment of books in as attractive a way as possible. Very often the answer was returned that no books were *wanted*, but to help us along, they would buy fifty cents worth.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE NEWSBOYS' LODGING-HOUSE.

Obtaining a lodging under false pretences—A large bedroom—Description of other apartments—*Remorse, confession, pardon*—The boys of the lodging-house—Jemmy Malpus—William Thomas Lackey—"English"—The "Wonderful Grandfather"—Taking a "*hang*" for fun!—The "Professor"—Fire—Newsboys' concert.

WHEN night came on, and that ever present question returned to trouble us, "Where shall we sleep?" I resolved to carry out a plan of which I had been thinking for some time, and accordingly found my way, with Willie, to the "Newsboys' Lodging-House." Opening the door, I walked up to the desk, and inquired of the gentleman who seemed to preside, "Is this the place for boys to sleep who haven't got any father or mo-

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ther?" Mr. Tracy (for that was the name of the gentleman whom I addressed), answered "Yes." Then I told him that we had neither father nor mother, and asked whether we might sleep there. I think that if he had looked hard at my face he could have seen that I was telling a lie, for I felt my guilty cheeks burn with shame! But he only inquired where we had been sleeping lately, and then gave us the permission which we wanted, on condition of our paying six cents apiece for the privilege, according to the rules of the establishment.

We felt very rich, as we had in our possession six dollars which we had earned, and imagined ourselves on the highway to wealth. Mr. Tracy took the twelve cents, and entered our names as William and John Moore, which I had purposely given him instead of our right names, for better concealment of our movements.

After sitting by the fire for a few minutes, answering all the questions that were put to

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us, we passed quietly into the bed-room. Our minds were so much occupied with wonderings and speculations about our new home, that we did not examine things about us very closely. We could not but see, however, that the accommodations assigned to each of us for the night consisted of a nice little bed with warm comforters and clean sheets; and glad enough were we to end our day's work in such a rest as was now promised us.

At half-past six, the next morning we were roused by the voice of the assistant, crying "Up, boys, up!" We started up, rather bewildered at finding ourselves in so unusual a place. Looking around more leisurely than we were able to do the previous evening, we saw that we were in a large bed-room about sixty by forty, holding at that time about forty boys; it was in the upper story of the Sun Building, and looked neat and commodious, while good ventilation was afforded by an ample supply of windows.

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After dressing, Willie and I went into the room where we had applied for admittance the evening before; it was not quite as large as the sleeping room, yet it was capable of accommodating one hundred boys comfortably as a school and sitting room, with considerable space for play-room at that.

The first thing that we did after presenting ourselves, was to return Mr. Tracy's kind good-morning, and answer his inquiries about our night's rest. We were shown by him to the bathing-room, and soon cleaned ourselves more thoroughly than we had for some time; then took up our baskets, and sallied forth to our day's trading. Thus we were at last fairly settled in that noble institution of New York benevolence and forethought,—*The Newsboys' Lodging House!*

But though all seemed to be right and comfortable on the outside, all was not right *within.* There was a constant sense of guilt and shame resting on our minds; we had got a comfortable home, and the kindest of

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friends, but to acquire these we had made use of a very wrong story, and the more comfortable our quarters and the more cordial our new friends, the deeper did this arrow of guilt sink into our hearts. Two or three nights after our admission, we made up our minds that we ought to remember the duty of prayer before retiring; so we both kneeled down and repeated the only prayer that either of us knew. When we came to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses," &c., although scarcely knowing what that meant, the guilty remembrance of that *lie* flashed over my mind, and it continued to trouble me when I tried to sleep; it seemed hypocrisy to utter such prayers for forgiveness while we were living in comfort acquired by a falsehood unacknowledged and unforgiven. I could find no relief, except in the determination to see Mr. Tracy as early as possible the next morning, tell him the whole truth, and ask his forgiveness. I supposed that we should of course be told to leave the

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lodging-house, but succeeded in summoning up courage to carry out my resolution. I went to Mr. Tracy's desk; he was writing, but in a moment or two laid down his pen, and looked at me inquiringly; I then said to him at once before my resolution should fade out: "Mr. Tracy, when I came here, I told you a *lie*, and now I am sorry for it; I said that I had not any father or mother, but *I have*, and they drink so much brandy, and beat us so often, that we could not live with them!" I went on to tell him the whole story. Mr. Tracy, instead of getting angry and driving us from the building with a command never to return, as we expected he would, said that he was sorry that we had deceived him, but was very glad we had confessed it; from that day he has seemed a better friend to us than ever before.

It was not long before we were acquainted with all the boys regularly connected with the establishment. There were constant changes going on. Homes in the great and far West would be provided by Mr. Tracy

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and other friends of the newsboys, for the older residents of the Lodging-House, and as they left, new ones would come in to take their places. In the evenings we would have lessons to learn and to recite to various persons. There were three boys in particular at the lodging house with whom I became intimately acquainted. They were William Thomas Lackey, Jemmy Malpy, and another whom they used to call "*English*," because he was an English boy, and would show it by saying "hair" for "air," "ouse" for house," and "hate" for "ate." I think his real name was Daniel O'Sullivan. We five boys used to sell mostly the same kind of things, such as pencils, pen-knives, books, and stationery generally. It happened also that we were all Protestants, while the others were Catholics; so we kept together, and were more attracted towards each other than towards any others in the establishment, though we were on terms of good friendship with all in the lodging-house.

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Before we left the place, Jemmy Malpy was sent home to his parents in England, who had for a long time been ignorant of the whereabouts of their son. William Lackey left the lodging-house soon after Willie and I did, and went out West to live with a farmer.

"English" continued to go around selling books and papers, and making speeches; I think he still continues at the same business. I met him awhile ago, while he was imparting variety to his trade in books, by singing from door to door, a song about his wonderful grandfather. It was a curious medley of verse and of prose, as follows:—

"My grandfather was a most wonderful man,
He could do, or invent, a most wondrous plan,
He travelled around through vast regions unknown,
And always found out the philosopher's stone.
And just like a duck or a goose he could swim—;

"Talking of *swimming*, once he swam from Albany to New York, and beat the steamboat by two hours and a half—

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"So what a pity that life is a span!
For my grandfather was a most wonderful man!

"If he would only plant tenpenny nails in the ground at night, in the morning they'd spring up to be crowbars. Once he made a steam wheel-barrow, and put my grandmother in it, and sent it away up forty miles into the air, and she has never been heard of since; some say they have seen her cutting around St. Paul's churchyard;

"So what a pity that life is a span!
For my grandfather was a most wonderful man!

"But one cold morning he froze into a rotten turnip!—

"So what a pity that life is a span!
For my grandfather was a most wonderful man!"

This "English," or "Dannie," as we often called him, was a very queer genius. He once took it into his head to have two newsboys *hang* him. They agreed to do so, and went with him into an empty room in the

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Sun building; taking his red comforter from his neck they made a slip-noose at one end, and threw it around his neck, while they passed the other end over one of the beams overhead. One of the boys acted as hangman, and the other as sheriff. The prisoner said that he wanted to die just like an English robber; so the sheriff said prayers over him, the hangman adjusted the noose, and they hauled him up, and kept him suspended by the neck till his face turned almost black. Then they let him down, threw a pitcher of water in his face, and left him to his fate. Fortunately he revived, and returned to the lodging-house that night; in all probability he was thoroughly cured of his desire to experience the hanging process. The account of the matter was given me partly by himself and partly by the boys who acted as sheriff and hangman, and it is but one of the singular experiments tried by this singular genius.

But Danny O'Sullivan had another name

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besides "English." The newsboys called him the "*Professor*," which name he still retains, and to which he is very partial. The "Professor" tells the following, as one of his adventures. As he was once going by a theatre, he stopped a minute or two to sing about his "wonderful grandfather," when he was espied by the door-keeper, or some functionary of the theatre, who told him to leave. The "Professor" answered, "Can't you leave a fellow alone?" at the same time throwing at him a piece of a card, which he says went into his mouth, and down his throat. The insulted man started for his assailant, who took to his heels, but the man gained rapidly in the race, and was just putting out his hand to seize the fugitive, when the Professor, evidently with the intention of teaching him that there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip, lay right down on the pavement; the man fell clean over him, and while he was trying to get into an upright position again, the young

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and spry Professor was making the best of his way to the lodging-house, where he related the incident with considerable merriment.

There are many other stories told of this boy, which alone would fill a larger book than this. Many a time he has borrowed money from me, to pay for his meals or lodging. Once I lent him, at his request, enough to get him his supper. He went to Savery's saloon, got his supper, and then recited his famous song, for which he received seventy-five cents, out of which he returned me the loan, and had enough left to start him in business again. Poor Danny! the world has dealt hardly with him! I know not where he is now; he may be wandering over the West, but I hope he has a good home somewhere, for he deserves one. If he had enjoyed a father's and mother's care, with the instruction that other boys get, he would undoubtedly have become a great and smart man. He may yet

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become such a man, for fortune, though very *fickle*, yet always favors the brave. Let us hope the best from her for the "Professor!"

We were not without our times of excitement at the Lodging-House. One night at about two o'clock, when tired and weary newsboys were in their beds, some busily employed in snoring, while others were sleeping quietly and dreaming, we were all suddenly aroused from these quiet slumbers. Hark! what sound is that which grates so harshly on our ears? Listen! Ah! it is the cry of Fire! FIRE! FIRE! The Sun Building is on fire! rouse up! wake up, boys! if you don't want to be burnt up! Now there is a great confusion; there is incessant hurrying to and fro. "Where are my pants? Where's my coat? What's the matter? Oh! we'll all be burnt up!" and similar exclamations are uttered together. One boy shouts that the "bank" ought to be carried down; probably he had a large amount of "Savings" in it. Others tumbled down stairs only half awake

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and half dressed. I shout to have some one help me get my trunk down stairs. Jemmy Malpus generously comes forward. But at this moment we learn that our own part of the building is yet safe, and I concluded to wait till the Lodging-House is actually on fire, which as it turned out did not happen at all. The next house to the Sun Building was the one that was burning, and it was consumed to the ground; in the morning there was nothing in its place but a smoking heap of ruins; now a beautiful marble house marks the spot where raged the fire in its fury that dark night. Who shall say that the fire that night did not accomplish some secret and wise mission? None can tell! certainly it is not easy to see why it is ordained that men shall be subject to such terrible moments of suspense, why they should be thrown into such whirlpools of sudden excitement, unless it is to train them to patience and vigilance.

The newsboys were glad enough when

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they found that they were not to lose their comfortable beds, that they were not to be unceremoniously cast out into the streets again in the darkness of night. I am afraid we got "spoiled" by having had such comfortable quarters in the lodging-house, for the prospect of having to seek our lodgings in the streets, which came over us so suddenly that night, seemed darker than it ever had before. Ah! it is a hard thing, my dear reader, for a little boy to have to wander about the streets of a large city like New York, without having a permanent place to sleep in when dark night comes on! Yes, it is very hard to be a homeless wanderer on the face of this beautiful earth, when there are so many comfortable houses to suggest enjoyments which are denied to you! And then, when sickness comes on, it often brings with it the wicked temptation to seek for death rather than to live in such distress any longer. Often have I walked up and down Broadway the best part of the

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night, for fear that the police would take me, if I were to lie down in the streets, and then, when I could get a good place for a sleep, I would take it in real earnest, so that it might last me for some time.

I remember on one such occasion, when I was very tired and sleepy, going into an oyster saloon, and hiring the use of a bed for the night, for twenty-five cents. It was Saturday night, and, strange to say, I slept from this time till Monday morning! It happened in this way: the man who kept the saloon put up the shutters and locked the doors, and with his family went to bed. During the whole of Sunday, as the shutters were over the windows, it was very dark, and we did not know when the night went and the day came—so we all slept straight through, and when the shutters were at last opened, and we aroused from our long snooze, it was almost impossible to believe that it was really *Monday morning.* I had certainly the consolation of knowing that I

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had taken a pretty good twenty-five cents' worth of sleep!

Another time of some excitement for the Lodging-House, was the occasion of the famous "Newsboys' Concert." There were great times in getting ready for it. Picture to yourself about thirty boys, all *ragged*, standing in a very crooked row, trying to learn to sing; and Mr. Van Meter in the midst of them, as patient as they say Job was, trying to show them the difference between the different notes, and teaching them the words of the songs, and you will have some idea of the way that the newsboys appeared, preparing to give a concert for the amusement of thousands who will crowd to see them on the eventful night at the Broadway Tabernacle.

There were said to be five thousand persons in the Broadway Tabernacle that night. Four of us boys stood up together on the stage and sung: "We stand here together, resolved the *right* to *maintain;* with hearts

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true and constant, whatever may come, we as firm as the rocks will remain."

Then about a dozen boys stood up in a class, and sung (while Mr. Van Meter accompanied them) the funny A, B, C song. Mr. Van Meter would sing "A, B, C, D, E, F, G," and then the boys sung "H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P," &c. Then a boy stepped forward, and slily pinned a pocket-handkerchief to Mr. Van Meter's coat-tail, and then another stuck a piece of paper on his back. Then Mr. Van Meter would seem to find it out suddenly, and would turn around and pull the delinquent's hair, singing all the while, "Don't you laugh, you rogue, at me! mind you say your A, B, C; else I will whip you and turn you out of school, for you are a naughty boy, and do not mind my rule!"

There were many other songs of similar character sung there that night.

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CHAPTER V.

LIFE AMONG THEOLOGIANS.

New friends—The "Savings Bank"—Departure from the lodging-house—Union Theological Seminary—Schooling—Willie at Randall's Island—Yankee's advice—A situation at the West.

ONE wintry day, William was trying to make some sales in Brooklyn; it was very cold and snowy, and unfortunately, when night approached, he had sold but little. At the last moment he came to a house where he was kindly taken in, and his story patiently listened to. The good people of the house cheered him with a supper, and when he was sufficiently warmed and ready to go, they gave him enough to make up for the unsuccessful labor of the day. From that time Mr. and Mrs. L——d have been

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kind friends. They used to come to the lodging-house very often, and drop a dollar or so into *our* department in the bank.

This bank is a curious establishment; it stands between Mr. Tracy's little office and the wash-room. It is in the form of a square table, about five feet and a half one way and three and a half the other. There are one hundred square inches marked off on the top of the table, and within each square inch there is inscribed a number, and there is also a narrow opening just large enough to admit a fifty cent piece. On the underside of this table is a drawer filled with a series of boxes or compartments; one compartment corresponding to each of the registered square inches above.

Each boy uses one of these squares, which he remembers by the number, and if he chooses to try the benefits of saving his earnings he can drop his money, daily, through the opening into the box beneath. Mr. Tracy keeps the key of this drawer;

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counts the money in each box, and gives it up to its owner, unless he prefers to let it remain awhile longer in the bank.

It is surprising to see what effects follow the monthly opening of the bank. On the next day, you will see one boy with a pair of new pants, another with a new clean shirt, another in a comfortable pair of shoes, &c. The first month Willie and I accumulated eleven dollars in the bank, and the next month, twelve dollars.

The day at last came when I was enabled to relinquish my place at the Newboys' Lodging-House, to some more needy adventurer. A good friend of ours, Miss Anna H——, came to see us, as she often did, and after her visit, wrote a piece in the next number of the "Independent," entitled "The boy who confessed his sin." I read it, and found it to be a short sketch of my own history. Shortly afterwards, I showed it to the superintendent of the Sunday School which I attended, a Mr. C——g, now a mis-

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sionary under the American Board in Syria. After perusing it, he seemed to become interested in Willie and myself, and said that he would try to make arrangements for me to stay in his room. He did so, and by his invitation I moved my trunk from the Lodging-House to the Union Theological Seminary, No. 9 University Place, where I found Mr. C., and his chum, in a very comfortable room. Mr. C. gave me a little bed, and made his room quite a home to me. My daily routine of duty used to be as follows: From nine A. M. to three o'clock P. M. I attended school. From three to four, traded with the students in the seminary, and with others; between four and half-past six, while seminary exercises were going on, I studied my lessons for the next day. Then came supper; after that, a little more trading, a little reading, and then bed.

What a contrast with my former life at home! It would seem as though I should have been the most happy under my father's

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care; but the fact is, that in my present situation I realized much more enjoyment, as well as improvement.

There is something about the character of the theological students that I like very much; they are so kind and unselfish, and seem to understand one so well, that it is pleasant to deal with them. I have experienced many kindnesses at their hands, and trust I shall ever be grateful.

Willie in the meanwhile had remained in the lodging-house; but he also soon changed his quarters strangely. About a month after my leaving for the seminary, he came one day to visit me—when I furnished him with five dollars worth of books to sell; but that same night he stayed out in the streets too late, trying to dispose of his stock, when the police pounced upon him, and took him to the station-house; the reason was, because they found him in the streets at so late an hour as eleven o'clock at night, homeless and friendless. I think I know who had

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Willie taken up; there is good reason to believe that it was a person for whom Willie had refused to sell penholders, and who took his revenge in this way.

Willie was immediately put in the Nursery Department of the House of Refuge, on Randall's Island. From his not appearing at the seminary for two or three weeks, we concluded that there must be something wrong, and I went down to the Newsboys' Lodging-House to find him, but he was not there. After looking for him three or four days, I met a boy nicknamed "Yankee," a funny fellow, full of puns and good nature, who told me that he saw my brother going from one station-house to another, in the charge of two policemen; that he advised him to run away, but that he did not do so, although he had a good chance. "Yankee" thought that Willie was quite a simpleton for not taking his advice; but Willie had concluded that he would be a poor simpleton if he should take it, as he was sure to be

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caught again, and to be treated more roughly than before.

I then took the Third Avenue cars, and went to the Randall's Island Nursery Department, and saw Willie. When we first met, he began to cry, but soon dried his tears, and we talked matters over. When I left the building, it was with the resolution to get him out as soon as I could. On telling Mr. C. about the case, he advised me to find a place in the country for Willie, and we applied to my good friend Mr. M——y, of the Children's Aid Society, who kept a good look-out for a place. Some two or three weeks afterwards, a clergyman, Mr. T——, by name, came to New York, to get some children to go out West with him; he promised to find my brother a good home. He kept his word, took him West, and got him a comfortable situation with a barber, where we will leave him for the present.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST HOME TIE SEVERED.

An unexpected summons—My stepmother in distress—Father's sickness—Our visit to the sick-bed—Father's last words—His death—Sister Annie—Getting Jane away from home—Her new home.

MEANWHILE, during Willie's sojourn at the House of Refuge, an event occurred of no small importance in our little history. Though we had of our own accord made ourselves homeless, yet we had a father whose house might be our home whenever we might choose to make it so, or who might at any moment find out our present residence, and force us to live under his roof. But this was to be the case no longer.

One morning I was sitting on Mr. C.'s lounge, studying my geography lesson, when there was a quick, loud rap on the door, and

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who should appear to my great astonishment but my stepmother. I expected a rough greeting, but soon saw that she was in no mood to be angry with me. She had found out my lodging-place, and sought me out, to tell me that father was very sick, and that the doctors said that he could not live long; that it was his last wish to see me before he died. Mr. W——, a theological student, who was present, talked with her some time, and then she went away. I thought it was all a game that was being played, for the purpose of getting me back, and accordingly did not go as she had desired. The next morning she came again, but with no better success, and the next succeeding morning my sister came with her. I believed my sister's story, and therefore at once asked Mr. C——, and another friend, Mr. H——, to accompany me on a visit to my father, to which they consented.

We went up to the corner of Fortieth street and Tenth avenue, down into the

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same room where I had left him when I ran away, and sure enough, there was my father lying very sick; it was seven o'clock in the evening, and just dark enough to need lights, and as my stepmother was away at one of the neighbors, I sent Jane out for some candles.

When father found that I was in the room, he put out his arm to shake hands with me; he asked me if I was Johnny; I told him, "Yes." Mr. C. then asked him what he wished me to do. Father answered, "Whatever he thinks best for himself." Mr. C. then talked with him about the other world, and his preparation for its scenes. When we at last left him, we felt that he was beyond all human aid. He died that night at three o'clock. How strange that I should be permitted, after so long a separation, to see him just the night in which he died! Three days afterwards he was buried in the Potters' Field, without a funeral!

Such was the sad work of that drink,

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which maddens and destroys its victim! It had degraded him from a noble position in his family and in society, to all the wretchedness of drunken poverty; it now, as the last terrible act of its fiendish work, cut him off from the living in the prime of his life, sent him without even the formality of a mourning procession to his grave, and scattered among the bones of the refuse of a vile city, those remains of a once kind and loved father, who might else have slept his last sleep in the quiet cemetery consecrated by the ashes of his ancestors, and side by side with those beloved friends who had gone before! Then, too, some neat tablet might have borne his name, and told us, his children, in after years, over what sacred sod we might drop the tears of fond remembrance. But now there is no such spot sacred to his memory—and our inmost feelings tell us that it had been better had the restless ocean received his body, and scattered his bones along the sands of its shores, to bleach under

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the bright sun, than for that field, whose dust is the dust of the low, the vile, the UNKNOWN, the UNLOVED, to have become his burial-place!

About two weeks after this sad event, I ventured to go up and see my stepmother. She had moved to Forty-seventh street, where I found her; I gave her all the money that I had at the time, which was one dollar and twenty-five cents, and then returned home.

Not very long afterwards, sister Annie came to the seminary, and asked me to get her a place in the West, as our stepmother did not use her exactly right. We succeeded in finding a place in a good family, where she is now living happily, and with improvement to herself.

Then we consulted Mr. Van Meter about my other little sisters, who needed a good home very much, and it seemed best for me to get Jane at least away from her present quarters.

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With this object in view, I went up to see her; our stepmother as usual was very poor, and willing to listen to any plan for making money; so it was soon arranged that Jane should come to the seminary, and I should fit her out with a stock of books to sell. She came the very next day, and I arranged quite a little stock for her to begin upon, which seemed a much more respectable employment, than the only other means of living which was left her—namely, *begging*. Two days after, on visiting the house, my stepmother asked me how many books I had given Jane. I told her, and she replied that then there was one missing; on finding this out, she fell upon Jane, and beat her unmercifully, and while my poor sister lay crying, and writhing upon the floor, I left the house determined to seize the earliest opportunity to release her from this tyranny. Accordingly, a short time after this occurrence, I took an opportunity, when our stepmother was away, to ask Jane whether she would

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not like to get a pair of shoes. On her replying yes, we took a red car and rode down to Worth street, and from there to the Five Points Mission, where we found Mr. Van Meter. He at once befriended my sister, gave her new shoes and clothes, and asked if she would not like to go to a country-home in the far West. She replied that she would like it very much, and accordingly Mr. Van Meter took her out with his next party, and put her into a very nice home in Canton, Illinois, where she is at present staying.

Meanwhile, my stepmother, on finding that Jane had gone, became very angry, and, on being told who was fitting her out for the West, she went at once to Mr. Van Meter, and tried to make him give Jane up. Finding this of no avail, she applied at a police court; but as she had proved herself so harsh and cruel a parent, the law decided against her, and she had to return home without gaining her point.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE WEST.

Dealing in furniture—An unprofitable job—Plans for going to college—City of Elms—Room in Divinity College—Public school again—Motives for a western trip—Stock in trade—The journey undertaken—Making a "*sensation*"—Chicago—Iowa City—A glimpse at a western school—A long stage ride—Mr. P——, before he went into the water—Mr. P——, after he came out—Meeting Willie at Fort Desmoines—Comforts of having a baby for a fellow passenger—Visit to Jane—Return to Chicago—Kind friends—Atlantic telegraph—Cable celebration.

At last then Willie, Mary Jane, and Annie, had all secured good homes in the country, far from New York city, and its influences. I now felt more free to look around, and see how I could dispose of *myself* in the best manner. At different times I had made some money, by buying second-hand furni-

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ture of the students, mending, painting, and varnishing it, and then selling it at a considerable profit. Becoming bolder by success, I concluded to make a larger venture, and borrowed thirty dollars, which added to ten of my own gave me a capital of forty, with which I bought quite a stock of furniture. This I hoped, after painting and refitting it, to sell for eighty dollars, but I was mistaken, for the amount that I succeeded in realizing for the whole was only sixty dollars, and a large portion of that being on trust, quite a portion of it never got to my pocket, on account of several persons neglecting to pay me for their purchases.

My profits for this job did not pay for my board and other expenses, and before long, a debt of seventy-five dollars stared me in the face. I was still going to school, and getting much interested in study. Hearing the students around me talking very often about college, I began to get an ambition to go through college myself, and especially if it

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could be such a noble one as Yale. With the intention of trying to acquire an education in New Haven, while I supported myself, partially at least, by trading with the large body of students in that place, I soon went to the famous City of Elms, and by invitation made my home with a good friend of mine, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary, at this time continuing his studies in New Haven, and rooming in Divinity College.

By the kindness of friends, I was received into one of the public schools, and went on for about six months with my studies; but to my sorrow found it impossible to devote so much of my time to keep up with the regular classes in the school, and yet earn enough to pay my current expenses, though many of the students of the college patronized me in my trading, which I carried on evenings, and on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. There seemed, therefore, to be no way but for me to give up study for awhile,

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and try to earn enough to pay off my debts, and if possible lay up something to enable me to resume my studies again; and I made this my business during the remainder of the college year.

When the summer vacation of 1858 came, and my customers the students were dispersed, I concluded, for several reasons, to make a trip westward. Nine months had passed since any news had reached me from brother Willie, and I wanted to visit him and see what might be the matter. Another motive was, the hope, in some way or other, to find the means of making some money to help me out of my trouble. It cannot be denied that a strong desire to see something of this great country, had no small effect in inducing me to undertake this journey.

The first step was to lay in a stock of penknives, and a few other small articles which I could trade off on the journey, as a means of paying my travelling-expenses. Then I went down to New York, and called on my

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old and kind friend, Mr. Van Meter, whom I found on the point of taking out a party of boys and girls to homes in the West; and as he could take me to Chicago for seven dollars, while it would cost me otherwise at least fourteen besides my meals, I at once availed myself of so excellent a chance.

I procured, through my good friend, a through ticket to Iowa City; and joined the lively little party under his care. We had a very interesting journey. When we reached Dunkirk, the western terminus of the Erie Railroad, the people of the village collected in quite a throng around the cars that we were in, and Mr. Van Meter made them a speech; after which the good folks went to their homes, and soon returned, bringing to the children plenty of crackers and cakes. After eating them our little company sang a song, of which this was the principal idea—

"We'll stand the storm, it won't be long,
We'll anchor bye-and-bye,"

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which seemed quite appropriate to the occasion. Then the stout iron horse snorted, and took one or two long breaths, and started briskly on his westward way.

There were quite a number of such little gatherings, at the more important places on the route, as the party moved on; and at almost every place some one would offer to take one or more of the children to their own homes and provide for them, which offers were gladly accepted. The best children were of course picked out first, and the company kept dwindling down as it went on, till at last Mr. Van Meter found himself alone! All the members of his little charge had been put in comfortable homes, and their kind guardian hastened back to New York to collect another party.

It is wonderful to notice the warm-heartedness of the people of the great West. I think I may say that I never met kinder people than those Westerners; although there are more good people all over the United

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States than one would perhaps imagine, unless he had found it out in his own experience. Yet the Westerners, as a class, are as kind as any people on the globe; their generosity to me I can never forget.

At Chicago I parted with Mr. Van Meter's company, and started directly for Iowa City, which I reached after traveling one day and one night. I put up at the Clinton House, and soon afterwards hunted up my sister Annie, who proved to be in a very comfortable home.

In order to find where my brother Willie was, it was necessary to call on the Rev. Mr. T——, the gentleman in whose charge Willie and Annie went to the West. Mr. T. lived a mile or two out of town, and in trying to find his house, I wandered around in various paths through the woods for about half an hour, and at last came back to exactly the point from which I had started. Getting discouraged at this attempt, I made my way to the nearest house, where a German boy

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was lounging on the doorstep. He knew Mr. T.'s house, and on my promising him a dime for his trouble, he agreed to guide me to the place. My guide was a true German boy, and entertained me on the way by talking about the Rhine, and about the pleasures of a farmer's life, and so forth, till we suddenly came upon the house for which I had searched, and which was completely shut in by trees; it was in fact a house in the very midst of the woods. Dismissing my German guide, I inquired at the house for the Rev. Mr. T——, and was ushered into a little office, where he was sitting. On introducing myself, he said he was very glad to see me, and asked me a great many kind questions. He then informed me that my brother was staying with a farmer at Fort Desmoines, and after talking awhile longer, he asked me to step into his school-room, and hear his scholars sing. The room was about ten feet by eight in size, and contained about a dozen scholars, who did sing finely for

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children of the wilderness. Mr. T. closed the exercises with prayer, and then we had supper, which finished up my visit to this hospitable family.

The next day I started for Fort Desmoines by stage. It was a long journey—one hundred and twenty miles of stage-riding is by no means to be laughed at, especially in wet weather and on rough roads; yet it was in some respects a pleasant ride, for there was agreeable company in the stage. Besides the driver, there were two men and two women (one of the latter a German), and a German boy. The first obstacle which we met was a pond of water stretching across the road, in which the horses had to wade. As we tried to make our way through it, we kept getting deeper and deeper, till I thought in a moment more the stage would be afloat; as it would not do to venture much further at random, the driver called upon a boy, who was crossing on horseback at the same time and who was evidently

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acquainted with the spot, to guide us over the shallowest part, and with his assistance we got safely over. Pretty soon one of the gentlemen in the stage, a Mr. D——, who had heard me give an account of myself at the Clinton House, in Chicago, called upon me to repeat it for the benefit of our fellow-travellers; and I did so, and I believe succeeded in interesting them, for the driest original thing told to a weary stage-traveller is acceptable even when it would not be elsewhere;—as it helps to while away the time. Then we had a general conversation, though our German friends could only talk in a very few words of very broken English. However, they made up for want of words by the amusement which their few broken phrases afforded us. If there was, as frequently was the case to our sorrow, a tremendous jolt, throwing us off from our seats, we were sure to have fun from our friends in the German corner. The principal variety afforded us in the daytime, however, was

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the stoppage of the coach at the proper hours to allow us to get our meals, and these were served up to us in true and rough Western style. During the night we spent the time trying to sleep, while the stage was evidently trying quite as hard to *keep us from sleeping* by giving us a constant shaking up; but we triumphed after all, and managed to get considerable sleep.

Quite an amusing incident happened on this trip. At one time the stage-driver, Mr. P. by name, having refreshed himself rather too often at the taverns along the road, was just about "three sheets in the wind," when he alighted from the top of the stage to water the horses at a pond of water connected with a stream called "Squaw's Creek." Mr. P. took the pail in order to get the horses a token of his kind regard for their welfare, and stooped over the water to carry out his intentions. I suppose the liquor which he had drunk last had not yet had time to get down to his lower extremities; at any rate, for some

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reason or other he proved to be top-heavy—consequently, as he stooped, his head and shoulders weighed down so heavily as to destroy his balance, and he dipped head foremost into the water! Happily there was another man with him on the stage, who jumped off and saved him from very serious consequences.

But it was droll enough to make the most serious person laugh to see Mr. P.'s figure after he got out of the creek; he stood for some minutes in a stooping posture, trying to open his eyes, as the water, just about "as clear as mud," was dripping from his hands and fingers, nose, face, and chin! Although we tried to control our laughter, out of sympathy for his feelings, it was an absolute impossibility. The Dutch woman and the lady passenger stuffed their pocket handkerchiefs into their mouths to keep down their merriment, but the irresistible titters would come in spite of all their efforts. I turned my head in the opposite direction and

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laughed without making any noise; while most of the men managed to postpone their laughter long enough after the occurrence to cause the subject of all this merriment as little ill-feeling as possible.

In this way we travelled for three days and two nights, when we arrived at Fort Desmoines, the capital of the state of Iowa, and I put up at the Fort Desmoines House, which I found very well kept, and can recommend to any traveller who wishes a comfortable lodging-place. The next morning I called on a Mr. M——, with whom my brother had first stayed on reaching the city; and was by him directed to William's present abode. This was two miles out of town, and it was raining heavily, and the mud was very deep, but I got safely through the storm, and reached the house at about ten o'clock. William was *not in*, at the time, but soon made his appearance, and we met with joy, after our two years' separation; he was taller than when I had seen

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him last, much darker in complexion, and very scantily clothed, showing marks of having had a rough time of it; but he was strong and healthy in appearance. In the course of the day, I learned the particulars of his experience in the West. He had changed employers a number of times—had lived mostly in Iowa, but went with one of his employers to Kansas. He had been occupied at different times as *peddler*, newsboy, errand-boy, farmer-boy, servant, and then school-boy again. It seemed best that he should return East with me for awhile; and to enable him to do this, we had to pay an early visit to the tailor's and shoemaker's, on reaching Fort Desmoines, that he might present a decent appearance while travelling.

We took our departure at an early day in the stage for Iowa City; just before starting, we met Mr. D., who was one of my fellow-passengers on the outward trip to Fort Desmoines, and he kindly slipped a dollar into

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my hand to help me on my journey. There were in the stage, besides ourselves, three gentleman and three lady passengers, to say nothing of a baby. When we were under full headway, we had a lively time inside; every time that the stage jolted, the baby would cry, the ladies would exclaim "O, mercy!" and a big, fat gentleman next to me would be thrown up from his seat and settle down into my lap, almost crushing me up into the corner; and when I complained, he only laughed, in a way that seemed to imply that it was a good joke, and served me right for being such a little boy! Then, to add to our troubles, we had to stop every little while for the baby to rest. The last night but one of the journey, at two o'clock in the morning, we were within only seven hours' ride of Iowa City; but we had to stop for five long hours for the sake of that same troublesome, but unconscious baby. Then when three hours of good driving would have brought us into the city, it suddenly

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began to rain, and shortly to pour in torrents, which very soon made the road quite impassable, and we had to spend another night waiting for better fortune.

We stayed at the Clinton House, in Iowa City, three days, and spent the time in looking around the place. A little boy with whom I got acquainted, took me to the grave-yard and pointed me to the spot where his sister lay buried under one of the new-made graves: he said that his sister was always very good while she was alive; that she never made her friends any trouble; that she was now in heaven, he hoped and believed; and the thought seemed to give him so much comfort that he could even look cheerfully upon her green, sodded grave. As he told me this, I thought of my own precious mother, whose remains had slumbered for years in a quiet and beautiful spot, marked with a clean and tasteful slab of marble; and then of my dear father, who was buried in a very different way almost

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uncared for, in the Potters' Field. Some very sad thoughts came up in my mind, but I was too soon hurried into new scenes to be allowed to indulge in them very long.

We next set out for Canton, Illinois, where my sister Jane was living. The conductors of trains were very kind to us, and passed us over their lines free of charge, which was very acceptable to us, as we then had but five dollars in our pockets.

Jane was staying with a nice old lady, and was treated very kindly. This lady made our visit quite pleasant, by introducing us to a little party of young girls, in whose company we had quite a frolicsome time of it, swinging, singing, picking apples, and engaging in many other sports that carried me back in memory to my early happy home, and furnished many pleasant thoughts to my mind. When the time came to leave this pleasant place, we felt sad, and almost wished that we could take up our abode in Canton with such good friends; but we bid

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Jane good-bye, and leaving her in tears at our departure, we took the cars for the East. On reaching Peoria, we spent some time peddling pen-knives, to help pay the expenses of the journey, as our stock had dwindled to three dollars; and when we took the cars again for Chicago, the conductor, after hearing our story, passed us free to that city, where we put up at the Madison House.

In Chicago I found several kind persons, who became good friends of mine; particularly a Captain G——y, who introduced me to a Mrs. P——, and this lady at once invited us to make her house our home during our stay; we gladly accepted her offer. Her son, John P——, a very nice young gentleman, kindly showed us the sights of the city--the most interesting of which were the immense storehouses for grain, and the grand reservoir, which holds the supply of water for the city. We spent eight days pleasantly in Chicago, and the last was that on which the great Atlantic Telegraphic

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Cable Celebration took place. The illuminations and fireworks were magnificent, and from what I saw, I thought that there was more evidence of public spirit in Chicago, than in any other city that I had ever seen.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE CITY OF ELMS.

We call on our stepmother at New York—Her condition—We take Jonathan with us to New Haven—Hire a room—A bold attempt at housekeeping—Accidents will happen in the best regulated families—Youthful discipline—Its utter failure—The row—A busybody—Breaking up housekeeping—Jonathan goes to the Orphan Asylum—Willie returns West.

WE got along very comfortably on our return trip. On reaching New Haven I had twenty dollars in my pocket, for which I was indebted partly to my success in selling knives, but mostly to the great kindness of our good Chicago friends, who gave us as much as seventeen dollars in money, while Captain G——y presented me also with a paper, which was the means of passing me over the railroad *free*—to New Haven.

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When we arrived in New York we called to see our stepmother; we found her living in Seventeenth street, in the highest story of a house, between Ninth and Tenth avenues; she was lying on the floor of a small room, and was covered with an old shawl; we could not make out whether she was drunk or only tired. The only furniture in the room consisted of two chairs and a stove, while the floor was the only sleeping-place. My little brother Jonathan, now five years old, was living so wretchedly in this miserable place—half-fed, and not half-clothed—that I resolved to take him to better quarters. Through Willie, I got him away from the house, and we visited a clothing store, where we substituted decent clothing for his dirty rags. He then accompanied us to New Haven, and seemed glad enough to escape from his former abode.

It was my intention to rent a room in New Haven, and live there with my two brothers, while we should pay our way by

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the trading which Willie and myself could do. So we hired a room on Chapel street, and fitted it up with a bed, bedstead, a table, chairs, and a stove for cooking purposes. For a week we got along pretty well, but then we had trouble. Poor Jonathan was quite too young to take care of himself, and as I had to spend much of my time in trying to earn our support, it was necessary to leave him in Willie's charge very often for a whole afternoon. But Willie himself would get tired of trying to amuse his brother, and then there would be trouble. In short, we were too young and inexperienced to succeed in our attempts at housekeeping, and soon had to abandon the plan.

In fact, it ended itself in a curious manner. One Saturday afternoon, my two brothers were in the room, while I was engaged in trading around the college buildings, trying to earn enough to pay for our Sunday's meals. As might naturally be expected, Jonathan got very tired towards evening,

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and exhausted all Willie's efforts to comfort him, and finally, it seems, his *patience* also.

Willie, not being used to such a charge, hardly knew what he ought to do, but finally got it into his head that it would be very proper to put his brother to bed, and try to get him to *sleep* himself out of trouble. So he made Jonathan go to bed; but the little fellow not feeling at all sleepy, at last rebelled, and tried to get up. Willie, all out of patience by this time, and thinking that if this effort were to succeed, all family government would be at an end, contrived to enforce discipline by fastening the sheets in such a way as to bind Jonathan down to the bed!

This of course capped the climax; no other resource being left but *one*, poor Jonathan adopted this one, and yelled with all his might!

As a natural result, the tenants of the neighboring rooms came running in, and finding things in this condition, at once libe-

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rated Jonathan, and one of them gave Willie a severe beating.

When I came to the building, about an hour afterwards, I found an excited crowd, composed mostly of the tenants, who accused me of cruelty as soon as they saw me, and would not let me go into the room. Finding that I could not do anything alone, I applied to the friend with whom I lived during most of my stay in New Haven, who at once went down to the house with me, obtained admittance into the room where Jonathan was, and explained to those present the true state of the case. We had a great deal of difficulty, however, in setting matters right again, principally because of the presence of a narrow-minded busy-body in the shape of a woman, who got the idea into her head that Jonathan was the son of respectable parents in some part of the country, who had been stolen by us, and was being abused; nothing in the world would convince her of the contrary, and she employed

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herself evidently with great satisfaction in retailing the story to every one who would listen to the rattle of her tongue. For aught I know to the contrary, she firmly believes her version of the matter to this day!

Our housekeeping of course could not stand such a shock as this was; and by the advice of friends, we broke up our new arrangements.

Jonathan went into the hands of kind people, at the New Haven Orphan Asylum; Willie returned again to the West, with a fresh party of boys under Mr. Van Meter's care, to try his fortune again in some kind family,—while, relieved of the cares of this little household, I have since had my time more to myself, but yet find it hard work to be faithful to my *customers* and to my *books* at the same time.

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CHAPTER IX.

REMINISCENCES.

A visit to the Lodging-House in 1860—Mr. Brace's speech—New faces—The rehearsal—The supper and Sunday dinner—Pleasant memories—Songs—Verses for the newsboy to remember.

THE Lodging-House has changed considerably since I was one of its inmates. There is not a single boy there now who enjoyed its comforts at that time. In order to renew its acquaintance, and call back pleasant memories, I visited it a few days ago. On my way to the place, I could not help asking myself—Where is William Thomas Lackey—where is Jemmy Malpus—or where are any of my former companions in those pleasant walls? They have all gone! most of them happily to good homes in the West,

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and we need not be very much surprised if we hear of some of them, one of these days, as great men who are helping to steer the SHIP OF STATE, or sitting behind judges' desks, or filling honored pulpits with heaven-blessed talent.

As I approach the door of the Lodging-House, in the top story of the Sun Buildings, I hear a voice and stop to listen. It is the well-known voice of Mr. Brace; he is making the boys a speech, and is telling them, for their encouragement, of a senator who was once a newsboy, and showing them that perseverance and industry can accomplish almost everything. The speech is through; I open the door and walk in; Mr. Brace gives me a friendly shake of the hand, and a kind word or two of encouragement; then taking his hat, leaves the room.

I look around and recognise at once that familiar "Bank" with its hundred boxes and its hundred openings to receive the coin. And so one by one all the well-remembered

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features of this my former home pass under my eye. But the faces of the boys gathered in groups here and there in some conversation or sport are all new and strange, and I cannot feel quite at home. They seem to be enjoying themselves just as we used to do; a little group of those most theatrically inclined are just at this moment trying to enact some of the scenes of Shakspeare's "Macbeth," which they have become acquainted with at the theatres, and they are doing this perhaps not merely for their present amusement, but with an eye to "turning an honest penny" by declaiming in this way at the hotels, after a little more practice in private. There is one thing in the room which I am sure is new. It is a row of receivers or boilers on a stout shelf raised a few feet from the floor. I ask about them, and am told that they are for holding tea and coffee; and that now instead of charging the boys *six* cents for lodging alone, they charge *eight* cents, and give them a supper

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in addition. I am told also that this is used as a strong inducement to keep the boys from the *theatres;* for if they go, they lose their supper, which to the hungry newsboy is a great loss. They also have a Sunday dinner for boys who prefer a quiet day in the Lodging-House to working on the Sabbath. I am sure that those who have paid any attention to the matter must notice that there is much less noise in the streets on Sunday, from the newsboys, than formerly —and although it may partly be owing to the vigilance of the Metropolitan Police, I think it is owing still more to the effects of the Sunday dinner.

Mr. Tracy, who formerly had charge of the lodging-house, has left it, and is now employed in the Children's Aid Society, in providing Western homes for children who are in need of homes. This short visit on the whole has been a pleasant one; it has recalled the old scenes in that place, and

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reminds me that we were happy then, thanks to the kindness of our many city friends.

And now, just as a last remembrance of those days, I will call up a few of those words we used to sing together in our social evening hours. One was of *golden* visions—thus:—

"Ho! boys, ho!
To California go!
Where the golden ore,
Lies rich in store,
On the banks of Sacramento's shore!"

Or this, our favorite hymn, with visions more *golden still*—

"I want to be an angel," &c.

As the Indian vanishes toward the West, at the sound of the woodman's axe, and before the march of civilization, so vanishes the newsboy at the sound of the voices of good men, and before the march of intellectual culture, and although fresh newsboys rise up to take the places of the departed, still

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their numbers are growing less and less. Not less in the same way as the Indian, but "beautifully less;" not dying out as the poor freedom-loving and slavery-hating Red man, but dying out of sin and wickedness; dying to the temptations of a large city, and going to enjoy a gentler life in the Western prairie, and a happy rural home.

With the habits of energy, which their hardy street education has conferred upon them, they want but one thing to insure them complete success in their improved condition—and that is, to be faithful to those precious words of the Bible:—

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

"While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

"In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow

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themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

"And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

"Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

"Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel at the cistern.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

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Hoping that he will abide by these words of Divine command—we bid the newsboy of former time—*Farewell.*

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CONCLUSION.

HERE ends for the present, not my *life* as yet, but such a hasty account of some of its incidents as it has been thought best to commit to paper. Of itself it can be of little interest to any one but myself, and some of my kind friends; but as a simple example of newsboy life—of such a life as is spent by many a boy (or, with some unessential variations, by many a girl) in our great cities, commonly with more suffering, greater trials, and less aid from sympathizing friends, than in my humble history, it may have some claims on the attention of every benevolent man or woman.

As it is only in this view that I venture to put these pages before the public, it cannot but be a fitting moral to the simple story, to ask the sympathy of the kind

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reader for that class of human beings known as "Newsboys;" under which class, however, are properly included all those unfortunate children of poverty in cities, who have to live in the streets mostly by their own *wits* or *resources*, whether it be by *peddling newspapers, sweeping crossings, selling stationery,* or any other little traffic which they may carry on.

Theirs is a most simple but hard and busy life. Take for instance the newsboy proper. He rises from his bed of shavings, or more often from his bedless den, by four or five o'clock in the morning, proceeds to the newspaper office, and as it will be of importance in the sale, he tries, if possible, to be the first to get his papers. Perhaps he has to wait a half or three-quarters of an hour in the cold, before they are ready—but he feels amply repaid for his trouble, when the bundle is under his arm, and off he starts at a brisk rate, in order to have the market supplied before his companions arrive on the field of

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battle. For the newsboy's cause is a warfare on the battle-field of life, where he who fights the *hardest* comes off triumphant from the strife. We hear him at very early hours in the most distant parts of the city, and across the ferries, with his song of "*Here's the Herald!*" "*Times!*" "*Tribune!*" and then in a lowered tone, "Morning papers, sir?" Perhaps you take one; no sooner has he pocketed the money, than his voice sounds again, and he is off to the other side of the street, dealing to another customer the morning news. A busy worker is our early newsboy, now here, now yonder; now chaffering with a fellow-tradesman; now darting a whole square away, to answer a beckoning finger from some window; while unceasingly his melancholy voice is sounding through the streets.

By nine o'clock, the newsboy's morning sales are finished; if we still follow him—it will be into the coffee and cake saloon, where he takes a seat, and waits patiently for his

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breakfast. Meanwhile he muses as follows: "I had fifty-six papers for my morning's stock, for which I paid eighty-four cents. For the sale of these I have received one dollar and twelve cents, leaving me a profit of twenty-eight cents; nine of these I am going to spend for my breakfast, and I shall then have nineteen to spare. After breakfast I will look for some jobs at the foot of Courtlandt street; I may perhaps get a couple of valises to carry, for which I shall receive fifteen or twenty cents." Just at this moment, his thoughts are diverted from this practical channel, by the appearance of his breakfast, consisting of a cup of coffee and six griddle-cakes. All his energies are now directed to the consumption of what is set before him, which he eats with a right good will, asking no questions for conscience sake.

From the saloon, he hastens to the foot of Courtlandt Street. A lady comes off from a ferry-boat, with a bundle in her hand.

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Our bold newsboy steps up, and offers to carry it for her: she surrenders it to him, saying, "Take it to the Sixth Avenue cars, and I will give you a dime." The bundle is soon seized, and rejoicing at the chance, the boy trudges along under its weight. It is aboard the cars, and the dime has sunk into the lowest corner of his pocket; but it cannot slip *through*, for if every other square inch of clothing on his body is torn and ragged, the newsboy is always sure to have one pocket tight enough to hold his small change. In a few minutes he is again at the ferry, as indefatigable as ever, looking for another job: he meets a tall, wiry, gaunt-looking individual, to whom he offers his services, and gets a well-loaded travelling-bag to carry about a mile, for which he is rewarded with a *three-cent piece!* and with a downcast air at what he inwardly calls a "sell," he takes his departure for the saloon where in virtue of his thirty-two cents profit, he ventures to spend *twelve* for his dinner—

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which is sometimes composed of corned-beef and cabbage, and sometimes of a six-cent steak and a cup of coffee. It may be mentioned, however, that it is not uncommon for one of these boys, when he has done a good day's work, to march into a restaurant and order a dinner of venison or woodcock, with sauces, which would not be despised by an alderman, and which many of his fellow-diners wearing better coats would not venture to indulge in.

But to return to the particular boy whose steps we have been following. His dinner over, he is quite ready for another start; the principal business of the afternoon is to purchase a stock of evening papers, and he ends the occupation of the day as he began it, by supplying people with the latest news.

When evening draws near, he is compelled by that tyrant of animal life, *Hunger*, to take refuge once more in the eating-saloon. On leaving this establishment, he finds himself possessing just fifty cents more than he

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had when he got up in the morning. As he can think of no better place of resort, he goes to the theatre, which uses up twelve cents of his earnings; and when that is over—there is nothing left but to crawl into some favorite spot to rest his weary bones!

Such is the daily history of many a child of poverty; we must leave it to the reader to fill up this outline, with the sad details of bodily suffering, of drooping spirits, of perilous temptations, of seductions to crime, which the individual history of one and another of this numerous class will furnish, to any person who will inquire for himself into the matter.

How many consider this class of beings as *pests*, when they so constantly persecute the passer-by to purchase their wares, who would be moved with the truest pity, if they could only know the gnawing want, and homelessness, which drives these poor boys to such importunity!

How many are moved with sadness of

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heart, when they see them splashing wearily through the mud, chilling their bare feet against the icy flag-stones, and while their right arm encircles a heap of morning papers, their left is drawing their rags around them to shut out a few of the shafts of the piercing wind; how many, I say, are moved with sadness at all this, who are not aware that this is but *comfort*, in comparison with the *real* trials of the friendless boy!

They know not the stinging abuse he may nightly be receiving under his parent's roof —if he may yet possibly be living under it. Or more likely which he *may have received* before their drunken barbarity, or their delirious death, dropped him homeless upon the world!

They know not that the shades of night set in upon that rag-clothed frame, only to find it shivering in the streets, and that the toll of the midnight-bell, vibrating along the frozen air, has only to dip under the stony stoop, to reach the ears of the homeless boy!

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These few pages, detailing the fortunes of one of this class, will not have cost useless labor, if they can only be the means of inducing the kind reader to look for himself into the life and circumstances of some of these unfortunate beings, till he shall be induced to give a sympathy that shall express itself in *acts* as well as words; till he shall be willing to share with the newsboy some of the clothing that warms his own back and his bed; to patronize his simple yet useful traffic; to labor to reform his parents, if they are yet living in vice; to deal mercifully with his faults and crimes—as he is brought up in the very slough of vice; to be willing to speak kind words, and words of instruction, to his mind, which shall be the means of turning his untiring energy, and his wits sharpened by distress, into channels of employment which shall make him, if not a *great* man, at least a *useful* man in society.

Then, dear reader, in your hours of happiness, of home-life, of health, of warmth by

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the fire-side, and of genial shelter in the slumbers of the night, of kind words from loving friends, of reading, of study, of religious instruction and enjoyment, spare a few moments, now and then, to *think*, to *plead*, and to *act* for your suffering fellow-creature—the HOMELESS NEWSBOY!

THE END.

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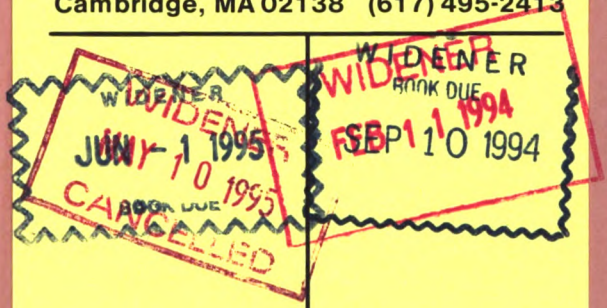

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